

# Washing laundry was once a 'herculean task'

By Judy Fraser

In our day, doing laundry is a task that can be sandwiched between other commitments. Our labor is little; we throw clothes into the washer and then the dryer; we hang them up or fold them; once in a while we iron something. Our modern conveniences make this possible — our electric appliances and our wash-and-wear clothes.

Our counterparts a hundred years ago did not have it so easy. Before the turn of the century, a woman's work in general was not only extremely time-consuming, leaving her little time for anything else, but also physically taxing.

Of all women's chores, was the most hated which she would most often (if she had help. One woman called it "the herculean dread." Just one wash, one about 50 gallons of water, water had to be lugged in (faucet for some) to the then to the washtub. heavier than the had to be wrung water had to be many washes

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Women had to heat the iron on the stove, wring clothes out by hand and lug water in buckets.